

# A History of Alamance Church

1762--1918



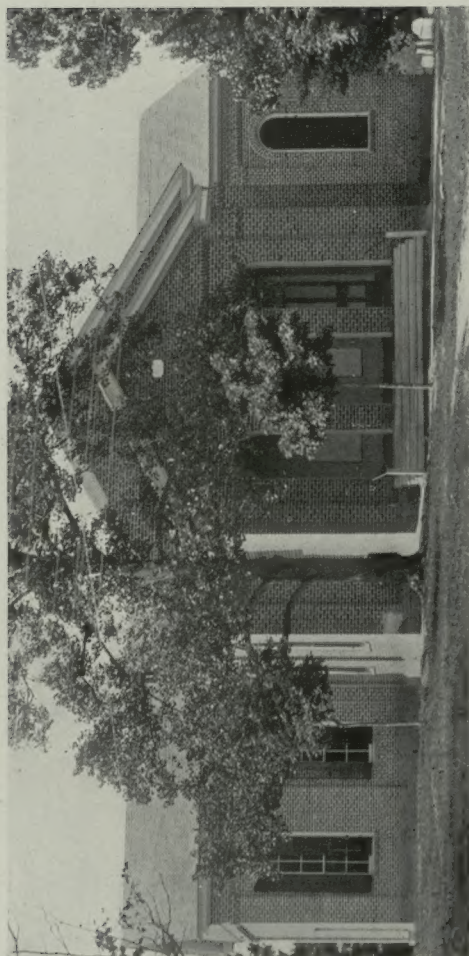
By

Rev. E. C. Murray, D. D.

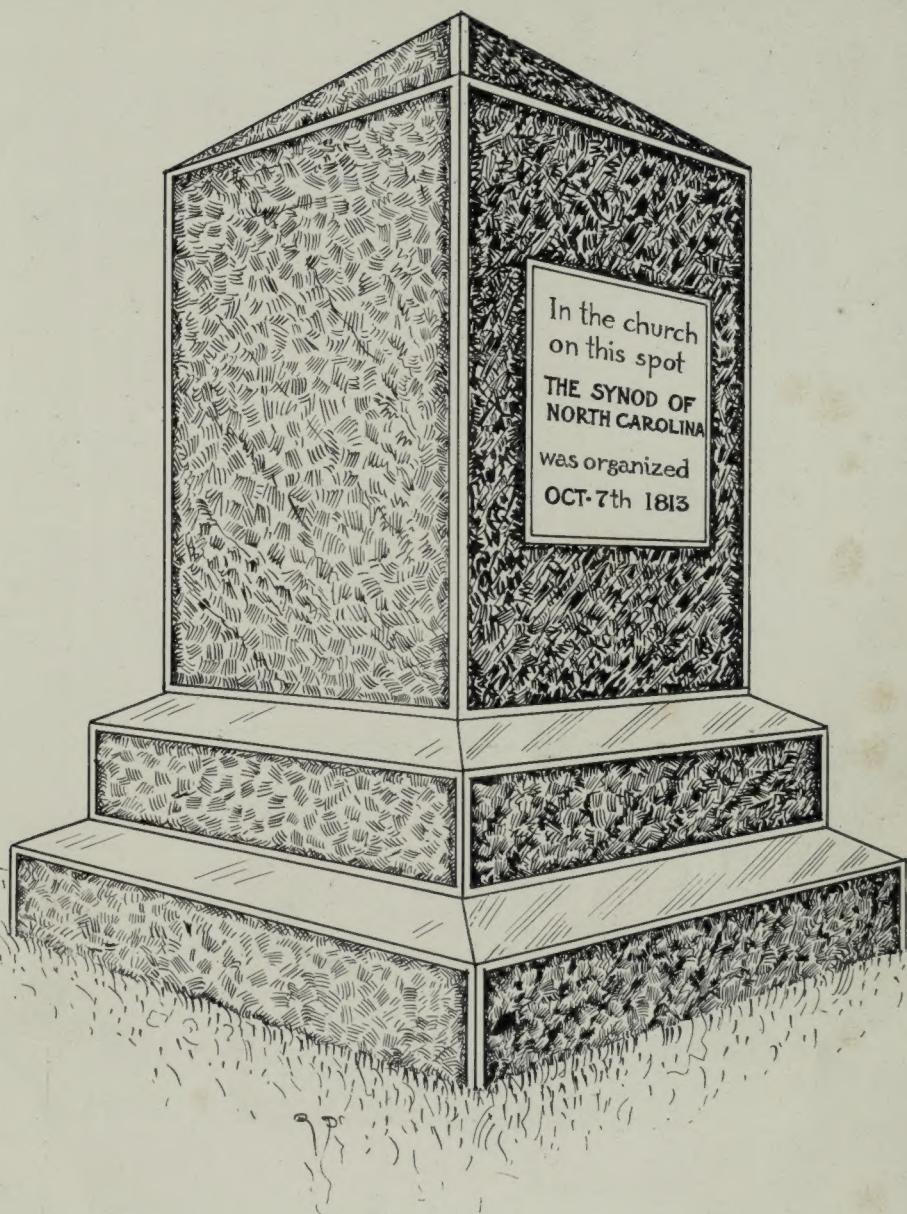








ALAMANCE CHURCH, 1918



SYNOD'S CENTENNIAL MONUMENT





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1762-1918

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REV. E. C. MURRAY, D. D.

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COMPILED FROM

Life of Rev. David Caldwell, D.D., by Rev. Eli. W. Caruthers, D.D.

A Historical Address by Rev. Calvin H. Wiley, D. D.

Historical Sketches by Rev. Wm. B. Tidball and Miss A. V. Scott.

Centennial Addresses—Synod of North Carolina.

Records of Alamance Church and of Orange Presbytery.

Miscellaneous Sources.

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# History of Alamance Church

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THE character and life of a church, like that of an individual, is largely determined by heredity and environment. In both these respects the Presbyterian churches of the Piedmont section of the South were peculiarly blessed.

## Piedmont North Carolina.

The hill country of North Carolina, when the forefathers of Alamance congregation settled in what is now Guilford county, is admirably described by old writers. The climate was delightful and the air salubrious, the soil rich and adapted to a great variety of products, the forests supplied many kinds of valuable timber, numerous streams watered the land and furnished pasturage for cattle and power for mills, from the hillsides gushed springs of delicious water, and the woods teemed with game and the creeks with fish. To-day the whole Piedmont region is one of the most prosperous and promising sections of the South.

## The Scotch-Irish Settlement.

This land of promise was kept for a people of promise. "A vast country in the Piedmont regions of Virginia and the Carolinas was reserved by Providence for the planting of a race who were to be fixed in the morally strategic points of

the continent, and thence to permeate a great coming nation with the outgrowth of their character. Hither they came, not as adventurers and hunters, not as outlaws and wanderers, but intelligent immigrants with good worldly substance, with needed implements of industry, with the arts of civilization, and with the institutions of Christian society."—(*Dr. C. H. Wiley.*)

The whole section was largely settled by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, that is, Scotch who had peopled north Ireland, developed there a splendid type of character, and then migrated in multitudes to America to find a larger civil and religious liberty. Most of them settled in Pennsylvania; and thence many colonies moved southward.

The first settlers of the Alamance neighborhood came about the year 1753, according to the earliest deeds. They purchased lands from Earl Granville in what is now Guilford county, but was then Rowan and Orange, the county line running some miles east of this place. Soon they built comfortable homes, cleared farms, erected mills, shops and stores, and were a self-supporting community. The rapidity of settlement, the secure possession of land by fair purchase, the immunity from wars with savages, and the absence of border ruffianism, were novel experiences for a new settlement.

About this time also many Germans came and located eastward of this community, and Quakers toward the west. These too were intelligent, industrious and pious folks; and the three communities by friendly intercourse saved one another from the narrowness, prejudices and bigotry of isolation.

### Character of the Colonists.

The Scotch-Irish had a keen eye for good lands and climate, and developed a country with such intelligence and thrift that wherever they settled prosperity followed. In this community the best lands and building sites for homes

and mills were soon selected, and many of these sites are occupied to-day. The mill successively known as Cusach's, Young's, Hanner's and Reynolds's, is nearly as old as the church. Well established on their own properties, these people were not rovers, and many of the earliest settlers are now represented by those bearing the same name or by lineal descendants.

The three institutions dearest to their hearts were the home, the church and the school, and their intelligence, orthodox piety and zeal have made them the most potent factors in the promotion of learning, morality and religion. Illiteracy, pauperism and flagrant wickedness were almost unknown among them. Their experiences in the old country made them most ardent lovers of civil and religious liberty; but they were also deeply imbued with the spirit of law and order.

They were loyal to God's Word and devoted to its study. In 1879 when Bibles were abundant and cheap, Dr. C. H. Wiley testified that in over ten years' experience as representative of the American Bible Society in three states he had found no communities better supplied with Bibles than this seems to have been at the beginning. It was an essential part of the pioneer's outfit. The word was the law, the text-book, their political and social economy. Many families had also adequate libraries of standard books, mostly religious, such as the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms, Pilgrim's Progress, Fox's Book of Martyrs, the Balm of Gilead, and the works of Boston, Doddridge, Baxter, Watts and Henry.

## Early Industries.

Agriculture was the chief pursuit, and besides our present staples were raised flax, indigo, and probably hemp. Cows found rich pasturage of native grasses and clover in the meadows and clearings, and over "the old butter road" large quantities of butter were hauled to distant markets. Bees gather-



ed honey from a great variety of native flowers, much of which was made into metheglin, and this beverage was mixed with stronger liquors.

These pioneers were largely dependent for all farm and home necessities on their own industry and skill, and many households made most of the common articles. Among the men there were smiths, millwrights, carpenters, joiners, coopers, tinkers, tanners, shoemakers, weavers, cloth printers, tailors, and hatters. The Sunday hats of men, made of fur, very high and broad at the top, were imported. Some real English broadcloth was worn, but the fine clothing for boys, and mostly for men, was of home-made fulled woolen.

The women were equally accomplished, and made their rude houses homes of comfort and contentment. They sang to the music of the spinning wheel, wove fine linen for sheets, table-cloths, towels and clothing, and sewed everything by hand. Specimens of their needlework 100 years old testify to their artistic skill.

## Social and Church Life.

The social gatherings were generally for both mutual help and pleasure, and whole families attended these house-raising, choppings, corn-shuckings and quiltings. There were very few carriages, and families usually travelled in wagons. Steel-springed buggies and Jersey wagons were unknown, and the vehicle chiefly used by richer parents and newly married couples was the lofty stick gig or double-seated sulky, swung on leather straps. The young people mostly went horseback, mounted singly or by twos and threes. The stylish gallants and maidens rode spirited horses gaily caparisoned. The gift of a saddle was a token of manhood attained by the proud owner, and a side-saddle was a part of a bride's dowry.

As the community grew, Sunday mornings would witness lively and attractive throngs gathering about the big new

church. Waiting till most of the congregation had clattered through the four doors and over the uncarpeted aisles to their seats, some of the young fops would ostentatiously march clear across the church, up the stairway, and around the galleries, with loud, creaking shoes, as was the fashion of the day. The high-backed pews, rented at five dollars a year to raise the pastor's salary, well-nigh hid their occupants, and afforded opportunity for easy slumber to children and drowsy old folks. The attention however was generally good; and the singing, swelled in melodious volume and touched with pathos by the voices of the negroes, was inspiring. Over all the services brooded an influence tender, sweet and solemn.

The dispersion of the congregation was a picturesque and exciting scene; the rumbling wagons, the cautiously driven gigs, the prancing and curvetting steeds gracefully managed by young men and maidens in pairs and troops, the slowly jogging old hacks, one with father and a lad behind, another with mother and an urchin or two, and others with two or three boys mounted on blankets. The thronged highway was fringed with pedestrians, some of whom would soon stop by the wayside to take off their Sunday shoes and stockings.

## Organization of the Church.

Many of the settlers in Alamance and Buffalo communities had known a young Mr. David Caldwell in Pennsylvania, being from the same county, and had asked him to come, when licensed, to be their minister. It appears probable from the records of his Presbytery that in 1764 he visited the communities. Buffalo church had been organized in 1756, and it is probable that Alamance was organized during this visit. An old member of the church told Dr. Caruthers that he distinctly remembered the event; that as Mr. Caldwell was only a licentiate, Rev. Henry Patillo was asked to organize the church for the purpose of uniting with Buffalo in the support of a pastor. Dr. Caruthers also says in relating the visit of

Rev. Elihu Spencer as a missionary here in 1764: "When the writer first came into this county some very aged people still recalled Mr. Spencer; and said that he had organized many of the churches in this region. He was present at the organization of Alamance." (Life of Caldwell, pp. 24 and 96). A call from the two churches for the pastoral services of Mr. Caldwell was presented to the Presbytery of New Brunswick at Philadelphia in 1765; and a petition for his installation to Hanover Presbytery in 1767. He was installed at Buffalo over both churches by Rev. Hugh McAden, March 3, 1768.

The loss of the church records previous to 1820 leaves us in doubt as to who were the original congregation besides Mrs. Mary Mebane and the families of her sons-in-law, William Cusach and Thomas Wiley, and of Andrew Finley and Adam Lecky. It is very probable that there were some of the Alexanders, Allison, Hanners, Neeleys, Paisleys, Rankins, and Stewarts.

The Presbyterians of that time were divided over the question of revivals, the New Side or New Lights sympathizing with the great revivalist Whitefield. In their migrations those of similar views naturally associated and settled together; and thus was formed the New Side colony of Alamance toward the southeast of the Old Side community of Buffalo. This divergence of views made trouble for some time, and called for much prudence and firmness on the part of the minister; but united under the pastorate of one both zealous and moderate, the extreme ideas of both sides were gradually modified and blended into a fine type of conservative evangelism.

The church derived its name from the Alamance creek flowing nearby. As to the origin of that name there has been much discussion but no satisfactory explanation. In the original grants for these lands dating back to 1753, the name is always Allemanee or Allamance, and so in the oldest writings in the community.



## Area of the Congregation.

The original congregation covered the territory lying between South Buffalo and Great Alamance creeks, and between the present villages of McLeansville and Pleasant Garden, an area of about 14 by 14 miles, with some members living beyond those bounds. It included the present congregations of Bethel, Mount Pleasant, Shady Grove, Mount Moriah, Pleasant Garden and Tabernacle, and parts of others. Most of the present congregation live within three miles of the church in every direction.

In 1812 Rev. Samuel Paisley, against the will of Dr. Caldwell, organized Bethel Church with members from Alamance and Buffalo, and it now has 160 communicants. Greensboro First Church was organized in 1825 with members from the two old churches. East of Bethel were Alamance members in the Gibson settlement, near the present Springwood church. Rev. Wm. D. Paisley frequently preached there in a school-house, protracted meetings were held, the interest grew, and finally they proposed the organization of a church. Presbytery met there for that purpose, but Dr. Caldwell, now nearly 100 years old, rode the 20 miles from his home to oppose it, and Presbytery yielded to his will. Thus, for a century and a half of otherwise glorious life, Alamance can claim but two half-daughters, and most of her original territory is occupied by churches of other denominations. Pleasant Garden Presbyterian church was organized in 1915 by the pastor of Alamance, and is served by him.

## Ecclesiastical Relations.

This church was under the jurisdiction of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia until in 1788 the General Assembly was organized and the Synod of the Carolinas set off. The Synod of North Carolina was organized in Alamance church

October 7, 1813, with 12 ministers and 3 elders, representing the Presbyteries of Orange and Concord. Dr. James Hall preached the opening sermon on "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"; and Dr. Robt. H. Chapman was elected Moderator. The Presbytery of Hanover embraced the whole South until 1770, when Orange Presbytery was formed, and this church has been under its jurisdiction ever since.

Alamance was a favorite meeting place for Presbytery in early times, and nine sessions were held here in fourteen years, 1798-1811. But after that there was none recorded till 1879. These occasions were eagerly anticipated by the people. Elder Cusach, whose home was east of the old church, near the old spring, and who was a man of means and princely hospitality, would sometimes entertain the whole Presbytery, and they would hold night sessions at his house. The people thoroughly enjoyed listening to the Highland Scotch brogue of the Cape Fear Presbyterians. "Their name here was long like the savor of ointment poured forth," says Dr. Wiley; "and my early recollections are associated with anecdotes and incidents the old people were wont to tell with glowing interest of the good Scotch preachers of broad accent, and broader sympathies, of quaint humor and fiery zeal."

## First Three Church Buildings and Cemetery.

FIRST CHURCH BUILDING. Very soon after the earliest settlement the pious colonists prepared for holding public religious services. Land for a church lot was donated by William Cusach, a beautiful knoll, bordered on two sides by branches of the Little Alamance. It was centrally located for the future congregation, just six miles south-east of the present court house in Greensboro. The land was then covered with a primeval forest of huge and stately trees; and one day, probably in 1762, two years before the organization of

the church, a company of men gathered with axes to clear a space and erect a church on the plateau near the confluence of the two streams.

Before a stroke was made, it was proposed by Andrew Finley, a devout man and a leader in worship, that they should kneel and invoke the divine blessing on their pious enterprise. Axes were laid down, heads bared, and canopied by the leafy boughs of a great tree, Mr. Finley led those sturdy pioneers in the first devotional service on that ground now consecrated by the worship of their succeeding generations. Tradition tells of the sublime simplicity and fervor of that prayer, and of how the saintly man pleaded that on the hill where they knelt a house might be reared where God should be worshipped and his word be preached so long as the world should stand. Thus those forest shades, which for centuries had echoed with the growls of wild beasts and the war-cries of savage men, became vocal with the sweet notes of prayer and praise. How often since then have earnest souls during seasons of reviving grace gone out into those woods to plead with God.

Kneeling by the side of Mr. Finley was his little son John, afterwards the enthusiastic Sunday School leader, and known as "Old Master Finley." As they arose the father pointed to a small oak at whose foot they had knelt, and said, "When I am gone bury me beside that tree." The little fellow never forgot, and a small slate tombstone marks that spot to-day. Over half a century after the father's death, the son, at his own request, was laid to rest in the same grave.

The hush of devotion was succeeded by a busy, noisy scene as the swinging axes rang against the trees. The space was cleared, and soon a modest log house was erected. It was used, according to tradition, till the close of the century. A paper bearing subscriptions to pay for church repairs is dated August 23, 1800; but this effort to repair probably ended in a decision to build a new church.



**SECOND CHURCH BUILDING.** The log house was torn down, and a pulpit set up in a dense grove, where services were held till the new church was finished. It was a matter of comment then and thereafter that it rained no Sunday while they worshipped out-doors, but poured the first day they held service in church.

We learn from the statements of Mrs. Anna McLean Donnell, who worshipped in both churches, that the second building stood on the same spot as the first: it was north of the graveyard and fronting it; and remnants of some of the brick pilars have recently been found. Built entirely by the men of the congregation, it was the largest and handsomest church edifice in this section of the State and an interesting specimen of architecture. It was a frame structure, painted dark yellow and is commonly called the "Old Yellow Church." There were two rows of large windows, the upper row lighting the galleries; and four doors, two on the south side and one at each end. Over each door was an ornamental portico roof, supported by curiously-carved iron brackets. The aisles and the pulpit, which was in the middle of the northern side of the church, divided the main floor into five sections, that in the eastern corner being reserved for the negroes. Large galleries extended around three sides, reached by two stairways.

The pulpit was a huge but elegant work of art and the pride of the congregation. It was three stories high and all of black walnut, profusely carved according to the fashion of the times. The desk was over ten feet above the floor, and the minister reached his lofty station, from which he could address the galleries, by a stairway with a balustrade. Just above his head and near the high ceiling was the hollow sounding board, a part of the pulpit and ornamented like it, with an oval front of carved wood. This splendid pulpit was made by Mr. John Matthews and presented to his pastor and teacher, Dr. Caldwell. Mr. Matthews was then a joiner, but afterwards became an eminent minister.

In front of the pulpit was the desk occupied by the two precentors or clerks. The desk was five feet or more above the church floor, and yet the clerk's head, when he stood to sing, was below the pulpit desk. These clerks on alternate Sundays lined out the hymns and led the singing; and their position was one of responsibility and honor. The Donnells were generally good singers, and George Donnell was clerk for a long time.

The whole auditorium with the galleries could seat about a thousand, and was sometimes well filled, although the church membership in 1830 was only 120. It had no fireplace, but it is said that they did not mind the cold, and that none were made sick. There was a log session-house nearby with a large fireplace where they sometimes warmed themselves before going into church.

It was in this building that the Synod was organized in 1813.

**THIRD CHURCH BUILDING.** To the regret of many the "Old Yellow Church," while yet in thoroughly good condition, was torn down. The next building was located east of the cemetery, and just across the road, northeast of the present church. It was made of brick, smaller than its predecessor, and was completed in 1844. The pulpit was at the north end and a gallery at the south. The materials and construction both were inferior, and becoming unsafe it was taken down in 1874-5, and the present building was erected.

**THE CEMETERY** was laid off at an early date, but it is not known when it was enclosed with the stone wall. An old slate tablet at the gate bears this inscription:

IN HAC AREA JACIT SEPULTUM  
CORPUS ADAMI LECCI, HUIC  
ECCLESIO AMICI, & PER EJUS  
PECUNIAM HIC MURUS ENCEPTUS ERAT.  
Feb'ry 9th, A. D. 1803.

Thus it appears that "this wall had been begun with the money of Adam Lecky," one of the original body of elders who died in 1800. The first headstones were of slate or soapstone, engraved by hand, some bearing quaint inscriptions and devices. The most ancient names are here recorded before they become entirely obliterated. Samuel Hanna, a babe of 18 months died in 1762, and was probably the first person buried there. There are graves of 13 other children who died before 1797. Mrs. Mary Mebane (date lost) was probably the first adult buried; and others in their order from 1770 to 1807 are as follows: Mary Stuart, wife of Robert, aged 62; Mary Mayben (Mebane), wife of William; Agnus (Agnes) Armstrong, wife of William; James Blear (Blair); James Neely; Capt. Arthur Forbis; Andrew Finley, aged 66; Elizabeth McLean, wife of Thomas; Thomas Major aged 82; Jane McLean, wife of John, aged 64; William Parkhill; Mrs. Elizabeth Wiley, aged 84; Judith McAdow (McAdoo), wife of John; Adam Lecky aged 72; James McAdow, aged 94; David Kerr, aged 85; Catron Wiley; John McLean, aged 83; and Mary McLean, wife of Marshall.

The graves were not located according to any general plan until the area was enlarged about the year 1858, when elder C. H. Wiley drew a plan for the new part, with walks and family lots, which were drawn for and marked.

### Pastorates of Drs. Caldwell and Caruthers--- 1768-1861.

REV. DAVID CALDWELL, D. D., was installed at Buffalo as pastor of both churches March 3, 1768. Two years before he had married Rachel, daughter of Dr. Alexander Craighead, the most distinguished minister of the Mecklenburg section. She exercised such a beneficent influence in his home, school, and pastorate that the current saying was, "Dr. Caldwell makes the scholars, but Mrs. Caldwell makes the min-



isters." They reared a large family of preachers and prominent citizens, whose numbers have multiplied through successive generations.

As his people paid him only \$200 dollars salary, Dr. Caldwell bought and cultivated a farm, and built a two-story log dwelling about two and a half miles southwest of the Guilford Battle-Ground. At his home he taught his famous classical school. He also prepared himself by private study for the practice of medicine, in which he became very proficient, thus ministering to both bodies and souls. He was the only practicing physician in this section until one of his sons succeeded him.

Enjoying robust health, sleeping but six hours a day, studying diligently in the early morning, exercising on the farm and in pastoral visiting, systematizing the work of a large school and two great congregations, "he performed his multifarious duties as preacher, pastor, physician and teacher, in a manner which entitles him to a unique position among the makers of our commonwealth." He was a profound scholar, a strong preacher, a faithful pastor, a successful doctor, and the most famous educator in the South. He was also a leader of thought and action in that formative period of our country's republican constitution. "The burning by the British of his great collection of books, manuscripts and letters was an irreparable loss to the church and country. Had they been preserved, the annals of early Presbyterianism would be far more complete and his own name would be noted in our histories among the most illustrious of American citizens."

Dr. Caldwell continued the full and regular work of his ✓  
pastorate for 52 years, until 1820; and died four years later in his 100th year. Thus he was present at the organization of Alamance church, led his people through the stirring years of the Revolution, witnessed scores of his scholars filling eminent positions in church and state, saw a splendid edifice rise where stood the little log church, was Moderator of the Synod of the

Carolinas at its first meeting and host to the Synod of North Carolina at its organization, and rejoiced in several gracious revivals of religion among his people. He was buried at Buffalo, a monument at Guilford Battle-Ground commemorates his services, and a memorial tablet, first placed in the wall of Alamance cemetery, is now in the vestibule of this church.

REV. ELI W. CARUTHERS, D. D., was installed pastor in 1821, probably at Buffalo in November; and served both churches till the union was dissolved in 1846, then Alamance alone for 15 years. He never married, and devoted much of his time and means to the education of the children of others. A public-spirited man, he earnestly advocated general education. He was a thorough scholar, an authority on theological questions, and an earnest and instructive preacher. His specialty was the history of the Revolution in this State, and his patient and careful researches resulted in three valuable contributions to that literature: "The Life and Character of Rev. David Caldwell, D. D.," "The Old North State in 1776," and "Interesting Revolutionary Incidents and Sketches of Characters."

Though broad and charitable in his views, he was a man of strong convictions strenuously maintained. He was opposed to slavery as an ever-growing evil in the South, and deplored the horrors of the war between the States. One Sunday in July, 1861, he prayed that the soldiers of the congregation "might be blessed of the Lord and returned in safety, though engaged in a lost cause." A congregational meeting was held, his resignation was requested, and soon the ties were dissolved that had united loving pastor and people for 40 years. Dr. Caruthers was now infirm, and died four years after. He was buried at Alamance where a monument over his grave and a memorial tablet by the side of Dr. Caldwell's attest the esteem of his people for a "pastor faithful, honored and beloved."

## Camp-Meetings, Revivals and Growth.

Camp Meetings were a necessity of the times when the country was sparsely settled and when many families could not attend church all together. So annual encampments were held for protracted services. For a long time the people lodged in tents only, but afterwards built houses with some home comforts. There was as late as 1830 a union campground for all the Presbyterians of the county, with pulpit, arbor and seats, in the woods south of the present County Home, where the meetings were attended by many ministers. The first out-door preaching stand at Alamance was under a great poplar west of the old yellow church, with seats arranged along the slope above toward the church. When the first brick church was built this stand was moved to the slope east of it.

There was a protracted meeting every summer or fall, to which whole families gathered from afar, the great crowd quietly and reverently attending the daily services. "Fraternity and social amenities were promoted, barriers and prejudices caused by isolation were broken down, sympathies were widened, and neighborly kindnesses developed and fostered. Old sores were healed, the pastor and all his people were made to feel as one family, the hold of the world was broken, and the entire community, severed for a time from worldly cares and scenes, became a band of pilgrims, with their faces toward the Heavenly Jerusalem, their hearts fed with its manna, and their mouths filled with the sweet songs of Zion. Prayer and praise were heard on all sides, day and night, a cheerful air pervaded all the solemnities, many pious souls were refreshed and edified, and many were the subjects of converting grace. The last day was always a sad one, and people who came with little interest in each other parted with tears and affectionate embraces."—*Rev. C. H. Wiley, D. D.*

Long after other Presbyterian churches had discontinued the camp meeting they were held at Alamance, as late as 1860,

generally on alternate years. The annual protracted service or "big meeting" in August is still a fixed institution, and almost the total ingathering of new members for the year is during and after this meeting.

There have been many glorious revivals in this old church. One which pervaded several counties in 1791 beneficently affected this people. A most wonderful revival that began in 1800 and lasted several years swept like "a rushing mighty wind" over a great portion of the South, and its influence was strongly felt here. The ecstasies and extravagances accompanying this revival elsewhere were mildly but firmly repressed by Dr. Caldwell. Another gracious outpouring of the Spirit, which began in Mr. Finley's Sunday school, left a deep and lasting impression on the spiritual life of the church. "The entire community was moved, and for days and nights the church, the tents, and all the surrounding woods resounded with prayer and praise, and religion was the absorbing theme; and about forty persons were added to the membership of this church." (Dr. Wiley). The fall of 1858 witnessed another season of grace. After the first simple gospel sermon there was a marked interest which was sustained for a long season; new families were brought in and the spiritual life of the whole church was deepened and strengthened; and four of the young men then converted afterwards entered the ministry. This revival seemed to be God's preparation of the people for the suffering and sorrows and deaths of the war that soon followed. Many protracted services since that time have been accompanied with special evidences of the Spirit's influence and by large accessions of members. "Alamance has been so characterized by such gracious manifestations that persons have come here from distant places expressly to obtain good from the troubled waters."

According to an old manuscript, probably written from memory and tradition, this church was organized with 22 members. By the close of the century they numbered about



80; after the revival of 1829 these increased to 120; and in 1870 there were 181. Children were carefully reared and catechized in home and Sunday school, but before 1830, and to a great extent long after, were discouraged from making a public profession of faith. This partly explains the small number of communicants. The negroes received religious instruction, were taught to read and furnished with Bibles, attending the church services in large numbers, and were received into its communion.

## Officers and Organizations.

SESSION, TRUSTEES AND DIACONATE. The church was properly organized with a body of elders. There is no record of deacons being elected till 1844, and trustees previously managed the business affairs of the church. We find the names of Adam Lecky, Jeff McComb, Robert Hanner, Thomas Landreth, Marshall McLean, Robert Shaw, Andrew Magee (McGhee), John Thom, David Wiley, Wm. Wiley, Sr., Rankin Donnell, David Stewart, Daniel Thom, Thomas Rankin and Finley Shaw. The lists of elders and deacons will be given later.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS were held for about ten years (1855-65) in which all the affairs of the church were discussed, and which proved very beneficial.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL as a regular institution was organized about 1825, one of the evidences of new life infused into the congregation by the young pastor, Mr. Caruthers. On preaching days a Bible class, mostly for adults, was taught by the minister before the preaching service. On the other alternate Sabbaths, there was Sunday school in the morning, a basket-dinner at recess, and a teaching and devotional service in the afternoon. Thus in the absence of the minister instruction and worship were provided for all.

The first Sunday school superintendent was elder John Finley, who had knelt by the side of his father Andrew in that prayer in the woods when the little log church was built. He was now familiarly known as "Old Master Finley" because teaching was his life-long work. Devoted to children, he gave his whole heart to these Sabbath services. Dr. Wiley tells us that during the afternoon devotional exercises Mr. Finley would generally become excitedly happy; and he could well remember the venerable saint's white hairs and tender tones as he passed from pew to pew singing of the better land, grasping the hands of the children, patting them on their heads, and asking them to meet him in heaven. He expressed the wish that all who had ever been taught in his Sunday school should attend his funeral, sing his favorite hymn, and see him laid in the same grave with his honored father. And in all the history of the church few burials have been so thronged with visitors and so impressive.

With Mr. Finley was associated another elder, Levi Houston, whose afternoon lectures were very edifying. The interest grew till old and young from near and far made a great congregation in the old yellow church, the glorious revival of 1829 resulted, and Master Finley and his co-workers gathered a rich harvest of souls.

**CHURCH LIBRARY.** Soon after the year 1800 Samuel Porter bequeathed the very liberal sum for that day of \$300 for the purchase of a library. To this was added other money perhaps, and many standard religious books and English classics were bought, which were literary treasures and of inestimable educational and inspirational value.

**THE FEMALE BENEVOLENT SOCIETY** was organized about the year 1823 through the efforts of Dr. Caruthers. Mrs. Wm. Woodburn was president, Mrs. Annie Wiley, secretary, and Mrs. Joseph Rankin, treasurer. This was the first woman's society in this state, the second being formed

in Greensboro in 1830, and another in Chapel Hill in 1854. For several years the women met in connection with a Ladies' Monthly Concert of Prayer, and afterwards annually. They came great distances, over rough roads, some bringing their children on horseback; and they met in a cold church. They would read the Missionary Herald, hold a concert of prayer, and discuss various forms of church work. This society lived more than 20 years, made over \$500 by their own labors, which was equivalent to many times that sum now, aided the Elliot Mission among the Indians, educated an Indian boy whom they named David Caldwell, paid for a life membership in the American Tract Society for Dr. Caruthers, helped to educate candidates for the ministry, and bought books for the Sunday school library. It was suspended for many years, and revived in 1873.

### Secular Schools.

The excellent classical schools that once flourished in this section of the state were the natural outgrowth of the Scotch-Irish intellectual and moral character. Dr. Caldwell's had for material equipment only the two-story log house which was also his home and a log cabin in the yard: but it became famous as the most efficient institution south of the Potomac. It attracted annually from all sections of the South 50 or 60 pupils, a large number for those times, and so from this fountain flowed fertilizing streams over a very large area. This academy, college and theological seminary combined trained more men for the learned professions than any other of its day in the South, and many of these attained eminence as preachers, statesmen, lawyers and physicians. About fifty ministers received from Dr. Caldwell their whole literary and theological education, several of his students became judges, and five governors of states. Thus for about a half-century this school equipped leaders of thought and action for those



stirring and critical times, and was a great factor in the building of the commonwealth.

For many years Master Finley taught school in the church session-house. "The Old Red School House," so-called from the red clay with which it was daubed, was a flourishing English school maintained for a long time by Alamance community; and from it came intelligent farmers and mechanics and men of distinction in the learned professions, members of Congress and of state Legislatures, state officials, college professors and preachers. It was situated in the woods nearly a mile east of the church, about midway between the two roads that meet at the church. Dr. Caruthers also taught during most of his pastorate in a log house in the yard of elder Joseph W. Gilmer, with whom he lived.

The territory now occupied by the congregation includes six public school districts, in whole or part, Alamance, Tucker, Patterson, Mill Point, Shady Grove and Brown. There are three state high schools in the county.

## Secular History.

As early as 1766 the people of this section began to rebel against the exactions and oppressions of the representatives of the British government. Having protested in vain against the seizure of their furniture, cattle, horses and other property for the payment of taxes, they organized themselves as Regulators or Sons of Liberty and declared their purpose not to pay any taxes until they were treated as true citizens of the province. The activities of the Regulators centered in what was then Orange county, and a large proportion of the men of Alamance and Buffalo joined them. Governor Tryon came here to quell the rebellion, and on May 16, 1771, the REGULATORS WAR culminated in the battle of Alamance, near the Great Alamance creek, about fourteen miles east of this church. A great crowd was there hoping to make

terms of peace with Tryon, and Dr. Caldwell was taken along by his members to use his influence. His efforts, however, were fruitless, Tryon's troops began firing, and after a brief struggle the Regulators, without military training or leaders and poorly equipped with arms, were defeated. But that first blood shed in the cause of the American colonies nourished the soil which afterwards bore the fruits of freedom, and those patriots deserve the poet's tribute:

“Immortal youth shall crown their deathless fame,  
And as their country's glories still advance,  
Shall brighter blaze, o'er all the earth, thy name,  
Thou first fought field of freedom, Alamance!”

This church stands nearly midway between the battlefield of Alamance, where the first blow was struck for liberty, and that of Guilford Court House, where final victory in the REVOLUTIONARY WAR was assured; and its men were all loyal to the cause. Dr. Caruthers says that “it is not known that there was a single Tory belonging to these congregations during the war.” Col. John Gillespie and Capt. Daniel Gillespie were members of Alamance, and Col. John Paisley was an elder. At the battle of Guilford Court House, ✓ another elder, Capt. Arthur Forbis (called Col. Forbis because he commanded a regiment that day) and a company from his neighborhood, including Allisons, Kerrs, Paisleys and Wileys, were placed in the front rank. While other militia companies ignominiously broke and fled, these men bravely held their position, fired two volleys according to commands, and retired in good order, leaving a great many British dead on the field. Capt. Forbis fell mortally wounded, and a tall marble monument was erected to his honor in Alamance cemetery in 1860.

During this battle many women of this church were praying at the home of an elder, while Mrs. Caldwell and the women of Buffalo were similarly engaged. After the fight

the women visited the field seeking missing relatives and ministering to the wounded. One of them found the gallant Forbis dying and brought him away on her horse.

The two congregations were harried by the English and marauding bodies of Tories, and many stories have been told of persecution and robbery, of privation and suffering, of startling adventure and courageous endurance. Cornwallis offered a reward of 200 pounds for the capture of Dr. Caldwell, and he saved himself only by hiding in the thickets of North Buffalo. His house was plundered, his property destroyed, and his precious books and papers burned. Mrs. Caldwell, with her crowd of little children, was turned out of the house and spent two days and nights in the smoke-house, with nothing to eat but a few dried peaches.

In the WAR BETWEEN THE STATES, one of the three companies first called out by the governor was the Guilford Grays, whose roll was augmented by men from Alamance. At least 25 of these were in the war, of whom about 12 died in service. And now in the EUROPEAN WAR 13 young men of this congregation and community are already enlisted, and more going soon.

Alamance has been represented in civil as well as military affairs. In the convention at Halifax in 1776, which adopted the military organization, Ralph Gorrell was a delegate, and John Paisley was appointed Lieutenant Colonel; and in the later convention at the same place which adopted the first state constitution, Dr. Caldwell and Ralph Gorrell were delegates. From this congregation have been elected 4 State Senators who served about 16 terms and some 13 members of the House of Representatives who served about 33 terms, J. Henry Gilmer being the last. It has furnished one Superior Court Judge, John M. Dick, whose son, Robert P. Dick, was U. S. District Judge for North Carolina; and a State Judge, John A. Gilmer, Jr., was the son of an Alamance member. John A. Gilmer, Sr., was a member of Congress, and once



nominee of the Whig party for Governor; and he and James R. McLean, who was born in this congregation, were members of the Confederate Congress. Gen. J. F. Gilmer was head of the Engineering Department of the Confederate States. W. C. Kerr was State Geologist for over 15 years. J. Henry Gilmer served two terms as Sheriff of this county.

It is remarkable that of the five men selected by Dr. C. Alphonso Smith in his centennial address as the most eminent Presbyterians in educational work in North Carolina during the nineteenth century, Dr. Caldwell was pastor and Calvin H. Wiley ruling elder of Alamance church. The election of Mr. (afterwards Rev. Dr.) Wiley as the first Superintendent of Public Schools inaugurated a new era in the educational history of this state. The inscription on the monument erected to his memory by the graded school pupils of Winston calls him "the father of the public school system of North Carolina." He served 14 years (1853—65), and it was due solely to his heroic efforts that the schools were not closed during the first years of the war and their funds used for other purposes.

To these names might be added those of many others eminent sons of Alamance in other States.

## Pastors Since 1861.

After the resignation of Mr. Caruthers in 1861, licentiate C. H. Wiley preached here occasionally, and 1862 Rev. P. H. Dalton was stated supply for alternate Sundays.

REV. WILLIS L. MILLER served for all his time as stated supply from April, 1863, and was installed pastor in November. He was a pious and zealous man, but disagreed with his people on the exciting questions of that period, and by mutual consent their relations were dissolved in September, 1865. Mrs. Miller was a popular writer, under the name of

Luola, and some of her sweetest poems are associated with her life at Alamance.

REV. WILLIAM B. TIDBALL, having preached as supply from December, 1865, was installed pastor December 22, 1867. He faithfully served till January 3, 1883, giving Alamance one-half of his time. During his pastorate the fourth house of worship was erected, the woman's society was re-organized, and the church membership passed beyond 200. Two of Mr. Tidball's sons soon after entered the ministry and his daughter, Lily, went as a missionary to Japan.

After an interval of two and a half years, during which the church was supplied by Rev. Ernest Caldwell, Dr. C. H. Wiley and Rev. Archibald Currie,

REV. CORNELIUS MILLER was installed August 15, 1885, and remained till July 19, 1891, serving Alamance for one-half of his time and supplying Springwood and other churches. During his pastorate of six years the membership increased from 205 to 282. He was a most lovable man, a diligent pastor and a fervent preacher, with an evangelistic spirit; and afterwards did splendid missionary work in Stokes county. He was, at his own request, buried at Alamance in 1911, and the congregation erected a handsome tombstone over his grave.

REV. EPHRAIM C. MURRAY was pastor for all his time from December 1, 1891, to November 20, 1892, when he was elected principal of the High School of Orange Presbytery and pastor of Mebane church. During his ministry here the Sunday school manifested new life and the manse was built.

REV. R. E. C. LAWSON began his ministry the Sunday after Mr. Murray left, and served the church for all his time till September 23, 1894. Dr. J. Henry Smith then supplied the church for six months.

REV. H. D. LEQUEUX came as stated supply in April,

1895, was installed pastor March 15, 1896, and served Alamance and Springwood till April, 1902. Despite ill-health and great suffering at times from asthma, he did good pastoral and preaching work; and during two years of his term the membership numbered 300.

REV. SAMUEL M. RANKIN served as pastor of Alamance and Springwood, and later of Bethel also, from February 1, 1903, to April 30, 1907. He was then elected Superintendent of Presbyterian Home Missions, which position he still holds. He is of old Alamance stock and has 15 ancestors buried in this cemetery. During his pastorate the membership increased from 275 to 340, the Sunday school and societies were very much revived, and the contributions more than doubled.

For the next year the church was supplied with preaching on alternate Sunday afternoons by Rev. Melton Clark and Rev. C. E. Hodgkin of Greensboro. In March, 1908, Rev. J. C. Shive was elected pastor, but his health failing after five month's service he was never installed.

REV. JAMES A. WILSON became pastor of Alamance and Bethel July 1, 1909, and remained until his health failed, April 17, 1912. He was dearly beloved by his people, and under his faithful ministry the church kept up the standard attained in membership, activity and liberality. The church was then supplied for ten months by licentiate John McEachern and Rev. C. E. Hodgkin.

REV. ALEXANDER W. CRAWFORD was then called for all his time and came March 1, 1913. Immediately the force of his tremendous energy and indomitable will began to be felt, and within fifteen months the church was enlarged and newly equipped, the manse renovated and the study built, the membership increased to 410 and the Sunday school to 260, and 4 elders and 6 deacons were installed. Then Mr. Crawford was elected Superintendent of Synodical Home

Missions and this promising pastorate terminated May 31, 1914.

REV. EPHRAIM C. MURRAY, D. D., began his second pastorate at Alamance, immediately succeeding Mr. Crawford. During these four years 59 members have been added, the methods for systematic beneficence much improved and contributions increased, an organ purchased, water-works installed in the manse, the young people re-organized into a Society of Christian Endeavor, two district Sunday schools have been operated and preaching services held during the summer at four school-houses, and Pleasant Garden church has been organized.

## The Session.

For the period from 1764 to 1820 we have no complete list of elders, but the following is fairly accurate: Andrew Finley, William Cusach (Cusick), Thomas Wiley, Adam Lecky, Samuel Nelson, David Kerr, William Paisley (Peaseley), John Forbis, Arthur Forbis, Hugh Forbis, John Thom, Robert Paisley, Samuel Allison (Ellison), John Allison, James Porter, —McCann, William Mebane, Joseph McLean (McLane and McClaine), William Smith and John Paisley.

The last four constituted the session in 1820, and in that year John Finley was ordained. The following were added in the years noted:

James Thom, Nathaniel Kerr and Thomas Rankin in 1826, and Levi Houston about that time;

William Doak, William Rankin, Joseph Rankin and James Wharton in 1830;

Finley Shaw, Rankin Donnell, Roddy Hanner (Hanna), and Joel McLean in 1842;

James Paisley and Joseph W. Gilmer in 1851;

John W. McMurry and Calvin H. Wiley in 1854;

John A. Pritchett and Samuel Rankin in 1866;



Allen H. Scott, William F. Thom and William Anderson in 1871;

William P. McLean and Lindsay M. Stewart in 1880;

William H. Phipps, William R. McMasters and Robert A. Gilmer in 1886;

Daniel H. Coble and William A. Sharpe in 1887;

William C. Rankin and Dr. Charles S. Gilmer in 1894;

Jasper A. Allred, John M. Phipps and John Forsythe in 1904;

Harper M. Coble, John R. Pritchett, Henry L. Hanner and D. Currie Stewart in 1914.

In May, 1844, Finley Shaw was Clerk of the Session, and he served 18 years, through 1861. Joseph W. Gilmer was his successor till May, 1886, over 24 years. Then Rev. Cornelius Miller and Lindsay M. Stewart each served a term of four years. In April, 1894, William C. Rankin was elected and has filled the position for 24 years. This is a remarkable record of painstaking clerical work through long terms of service.

## The Diaconate.

There is no record of the election of deacons previous to 1844. The following have ordained since then:

David C. Stewart and David Whitt in 1844;

Allen H. Scott and John Donnell in 1859;

James Gannon and James Thom in 1866;

Oliver L. Boon, Robert S. Phipps and G. Martin Glass in 1871;

William A. Sharpe and Daniel H. Coble in 1880;

James R. Coble, John Weatherly, David C. Clapp and J. Henry Gilmer in 1887;

John R. Pritchett and J. Alexander Smith in 1892;

David C. Causey in 1894;

Henry L. Hanner, Henry S. Andrew and Levi C. Scott in 1904;

Parker M. Causey, Paul Coble, John S. McMasters, Robert V. Gannon, John R. Stewart and Robert E. Smith in 1914.

The first Treasurer of whose election we have a record was Oliver L. Boon who served from 1871 to 1880. Daniel H. Coble succeeded him, 1880-7; and then J. Henry Gilmer, 1887-1908. D. H. Coble served a second term, 1908-16; and was succeeded by W. Lacy Sharpe in May, 1916. Thus three men for 45 years performed the arduous duties of this responsible position. Henry S. Andrew has for years been the Chairman of the Board of Deacons.

## Ministers From Alamance.

From this old church have gone forth many streams of spiritual influence to "make glad the city of God;" and among the most beneficent of these have been her ministerial sons who have occupied "the holy places of the tabernacles of the Most High." Besides the many ministers of Alamance stock who have been a blessing to many sections and various denominations, this church has sent into the ministry one of her own sons for every four years of her existence. The following 37 were born and reared here, unless otherwise noted. The list is probably incomplete as to non-Presbyterian ministers. The dates after names indicate time of ordination.

William D. Paisley (1798), son of Col. John Paisley, organized the Greensboro First Church in 1825 and was its first pastor, and his name is still held there and elsewhere in loving remembrance. He was a prominent minister and citizen, did much evangelistic work, was an impassioned preacher, a strong champion of the truth, yet gentle and sympathetic, and deeply pious. After a long life of great usefulness he died in 1857.

Samuel McAdoo (1798) moved to Kentucky and joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which has a Presbytery named for him.

John Matthews, D. D., (1803) was first a joiner by trade;

and his skill was shown in the great walnut pulpit which he made for the second Alamance church. After preaching many years in this state and Virginia, he moved to Indiana. There he founded the Theological Seminary at New Albany, and was Professor of Polemic Theology. This institution was afterwards moved to Chicago, and is now McCormick Seminary. "Thus the light that now so brightly illumines the far north-western skies may be said to have been kindled from a coal taken from Alamance fires." Dr. Matthews was the author of "The Divine Purpose," a classic work on popular theology, and a voluminous contributor to church papers and reviews, and a preacher of great power. He died in 1848, leaving three sons in the ministry.

———— Alexander (about 1805) was the son of John Alexander, who moved to Tennessee after the Revolution, where, says Dr. Caruthers, "his son became a respectable minister of the gospel in the Presbyterian Church."

John McLean, D. D., son of elder Joseph McLean, was licensed in 1808, moved to the southwest and died there.

Samuel Paisley (1812), son of elder William Paisley, was the organizer and first pastor of Bethel Church. He was an impressive preacher. After serving several charges in this state he died in Moore county about 1870.

James Kerr (1826), a son of elder Nathaniel Kerr, had the reputation of being a good preacher and faithful pastor.

Daniel G. Doak (1835), son of elder William Doak, after preaching a while in Virginia, was for a long time pastor of Zion Church near Columbia, Tenn., where he was held in high esteem. His next charge was Sardis, Miss., where he died about 1875. He was an earnest and successful pastor and preacher.

Addi E. Thom was licensed in 1836, and after serving charges in Virginia and Tennessee, spent the remainder of his life in Texas, where he was a prominent minister and a professor in the first Presbyterian college in that state.

Thomas H. Nelson, born here but reared elsewhere, was the organizer and first pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Knoxville, Tenn., and he died there.

John Paisley (1841), son of elder John Paisley, after a brief pastorate at Red House Church in Caswell County, died in 1845.

David K. Thom, a man of promise, was for some time a missionary to the Indians, and afterwards joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

John H. Coble, after laboring many years in this state, died in 1887 while pastor of Laurinburg church in Fayetteville Presbytery.

L. Augustus T. Jobe, preacher and teacher in Little Rock and Clarendon, Ark., died about 1883.

J. Calvin Denny was reared in Bethel Church, joined Alamance in 1849 on profession of faith, was licensed in 1858, and then joined the German Reformed Church.

Calvin Gannon and Hugh A. Wiley were members of the N. C. Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Robert Donnell, reared in Tennessee, was the organizer of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church at Lebanon, the seat of Cumberland University. He died in the prime of life, highly esteemed.

George Donnell, reared in Tennessee, was the organizer and first pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian church of Lebanon, the seat of Cumberland University. He died in the prime of life, highly esteemed.

John A. Woodburn, licensed in 1862, labored awhile in Texas, then as preacher and teacher in Hendersonville, N. C., where he died about 1883.

Calvin H. Wiley, D. D., born in 1819, was licensed in 1855, while State Superintendent of Common Schools, and ordained at the expiration of that office in 1866. He supplied several churches, but most of his ministerial life was spent as



representative of the American Bible Society in three states. This brought him into contact with a large portion of the church, and he was much honored and beloved by all. But his greatest work was in behalf of the public schools. He died in Winston, N. C., in 1887.

Elias F. Pritchett (1876), after preaching a short time in Missouri and Arkansas, moved to Texas and became a farmer. He was a man of strong Christian character, and after retiring from the ministry became a very active elder in two churches successively. He died in 1901.

David Cyrus Rankin, D. D., (1876) after a brief pastorate at Valdosta, Ga., was for several years Principal of the General Assembly's Institute for the training of colored ministers at Tuscaloosa, Ala. In 1889 he was elected Associate Secretary of the executive committee of Foreign Missions, and in 1892 was appointed Editor of the church's foreign missionary publications. All these offices he discharged with signal ability and great usefulness to the church. In 1902, while visiting the oriental mission fields of the church, he contracted pneumonia in Korea, and his visit, which had been so full of blessing to the missionaries was terminated by his deeply lamented death.

William F. Thom (1883), in all the 25 years of his ministerial life served one group of churches in Chatham county, N. C., including Gulf and Pittsboro; and died well-beloved by all in 1908.

Charles M. Tidball (1886), is a son of Rev. W. B. Tidball, pastor of Alamance for 15 years. After about five years' work in Iredell county, N. C., he moved to Texas and thence to Arkansas, where he was evangelist in Washbourne Presbytery. He became infirm in 1907 and now lives in Fayetteville, Ark.

William J. Tidball (1887), another son of Rev. W. B. Tidball, served as pastor, evangelist and teacher in Texas for about ten years; then as pastor at Taylorsville, N. C., for

about twelve years. He is now infirm, and lives in Fayetteville, Ark.

J. Porter Paisley died while in the Seminary in 1888.

William K. Forsythe (1895), son of elder John Forsythe, was pastor at Corbin, Ky., till his health failed, and he died in 1900. He was dearly beloved by all and his premature death greatly lamented.

Rosser A. Brown (1897), has for all the 20 years of his ministry been the energetic and popular pastor at Waycross, Ga., and the church has grown in numbers from 100 to 400.

John A. Gilmer (1900), was long a successful teacher before entering the ministry. After serving several charges in Fayetteville and Concord Presbyteries, he was pastor for five years at Mount Airy, N. C., where he died in 1913 to the great grief of his people and Presbytery.

Charles P. Coble (1905), is the son of elder D. H. Coble. He has done very successful work in Hopewell Church, S. C.; in Vineville Church, Macon, Ga.; and in his present charge at High Point, N. C.

Wiley R. Pritchett (1912), son of elder John R. Pritchett, has served two pastorates in South Carolina, Aimwell and Indiantown.

Charles H. Phipps (1912), son of deacon R. S. Phipps, was two years at Asheboro, N. C., and is now preaching at Windy Cove, Va.

J. Robert Phipps (1917), another son of R. S. Phipps, is at Pollocksville, N. C.

Gurney L. Whiteley (1917), is evangelist in Albemarle Presbytery.

Charles D. Whiteley (1917), is pastor of Blacknall Memorial and Durham Second Churches. These last two are sons of W. Thomas Whiteley.

Edward C. Murray, son of the pastor, is a seminary student, at present in the army.

## The Fourth Church Building and Manse.

The present church building was erected in its original rectangular shape and occupied in 1874-5, but was not finished and fully equipped until 1879. It is located at the southeast corner of the cemetery, and faces nearly due east. Well built of dark gray brick penciled white, with four large windows on either side and its front adorned by an attractive vestibule, and with a seating capacity of about 350, it was a creditable structure for a congregation impoverished by the recent war. The aisles leading from the two doors divided the auditorium into three main sections, but a traverse aisle in front of the pulpit formed a section on either side known as "the amen corner." The pulpit, as now in the remodeled church, occupied an alcove, with a window on either side and a lower platform in front. The walls were finished in dull gray plaster; but in the general improvements made in 1903 were re-finished in dark green. The Session-house is on the south side of the church.

This edifice was dedicated October 18, 1879, during the sessions of Presbytery. Rev. C. H. Wiley, D. D., the Moderator, delivered a historical address in the morning, from which much of the material for this history has been gathered, and Rev. D. I. Craig a sermon in the afternoon.

Under the inspiring leadership of Rev. A. W. Crawford, in 1913, two wings were added at the back of the church, it was recovered and replastered in grayish white, a new floor and carpet and hard oak seats were put in, and a furnace and gas lighting plant installed, all at a cost of about \$4,500.00. The seating capacity was thus increased to about 600. The storm of January, 1918, damaged the church seriously, but it was soon repaired.

In 1892 a lot for a manse was secured on the hill across the branch east of the church, and a cottage was erected which has been enlarged and improved several times. A hydraulic

rain pumps water from the spring through the house and yard. The installation of this water system and the furnishing of the bath-room, etc., are due largely to the efforts of Dr. C. S. Gilmer. On the western slope of the knoll and facing south, in a grove of maple, hickory, oak and elm trees, with a comfortable study and other convenient out-buildings, and an ample garden, orchard, and pasture lot, this is a most attractive country home.

## Centennial Anniversary of Synod.

The Synod of North Carolina met in Greensboro in 1913, and spent the whole day of October 7 at Alamance celebrating its organization there on October 7, 1813. Because of the large crowd a double program was prepared, two speakers simultaneously addressing congregations in the church and on the grounds. The following inspiring "Centennial Addresses" were delivered and afterwards published:

Welcome Address—Rev. A. W. Crawford.

The Beginnings and Development of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina to 1863—Dr. W. W. Moore and Dr. W. L. Lingle.

The Personnel of the Presbyterian Church from 1813 to 1838—Dr. D. I. Craig.

The Personnel of the Presbyterian Church from 1838 to 1863—Dr. H. G. Hill.

The Last Fifty Years—The Presbyterian Church an Evangelistic Agency—Dr. R. F. Campbell and Dr. J. M. Rose.

Presbyterians in Educational Work in North Carolina since 1813—Prof. C. Alphonso Smith.

At the noon recess a bountiful dinner was served to the whole assembly by the Alamance people on a table over 200 feet long. The Synod then met at the place where it was organized in "the old yellow church," and after prayer by the Moderator, appointed a committee to erect a monument to



mark the exact location, with Rev. A. W. Crawford as chairman.

This monument now stands there on the plateau above the bend of the road that leads to Greensboro. It is of beautiful gray granite, eight feet high, the main block being three feet square. On the north and south sides are the inscriptions:

IN THE CHURCH  
ON THIS SPOT  
THE PRESBYTERIAN  
SYNOD OF  
NORTH CAROLINA  
WAS ORGANIZED  
OCT. 7TH, 1813.

---

FIRST ALAMANCE  
CHURCH BUILDING  
(About) 1762—(About) 1800  
SECOND ALAMANCE  
CHURCH BUILDING  
(About) 1800-1844

It was dedicated December 15, 1916, with impressive exercises, after an address in the church by Dr. J. N. H. Summerell, Moderator of Synod.

## Growth of the Congregation in Fifty Years.

MEMBERSHIP. The church was organized with probably 22 members. In 65 years (1829) it had over 100; in 53 years more it had over 200; in the next 18 years it numbered 300; then in 13 years it passed the 400 mark. Thus the membership of this large country church has recently doubled in 31 years; a remarkable growth when we consider that it is only five miles from Greensboro, which in these years has been drawing largely from the country and growing from about 5,000 to 30,000 in population.

CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY. There has also been a gratifying growth in the spirit of self-support and in liberality to the beneficent causes of the church. The following figures denote averages throughout. In the years 1870-85, 189 members gave annually for congregational purposes \$400, and for beneficences \$50 or 28 cents per member. In 1886-1900, 280 members gave annually for self-support \$565, and for beneficence \$160 or 57 cents per member. In 1901-12, 335 members gave for pastor's salary, etc., \$727, and for the church causes \$398 or \$1.26 per member. An envelope collection system was then introduced which has been improved every year. In 1913 a pastor was called for all his time at a salary of \$1,200, and \$4,000 was raised for church improvements. And in 1914-7, 404 members have averaged \$1,580 for congregational purposes, and for beneficence \$762 or \$1.89 per member.

Three legacies have recently been left to the church, the incomes only to be used, as follows: by Deacon J. Henry Gilmer, \$2,000 for church support and the beneficent causes; by Samuel V. Young, \$500 for current expenses; and by Deacon John R. Stewart, about \$1,000 for maintaining and improving the cemetery.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND SOCIETIES. The Sunday school, with periods of revival and depression, has averaged little more than one half the number of the members.

The old Female Benevolent Society was revived by Mrs. Tidball into vigorous life in 1773, and made large contributions toward the building and furnishing of the new church. It developed into the Woman's Missionary Society, contributing more and more to home and foreign missions; and later into the Woman's Auxiliary, now showing an active interest in every department of the church's work. They have about 40 members, and contributed last year about \$400.

The Young People's Society has been in existence at least 15 years, averaging about 40 members. In 1916 it was organized into a Society of Christian Endeavor, and has developed in activity and liberality. Most of the regular members lead in prayer, and they gave about \$100 last year. There is also a Junior Society for Children.

### Improved Conditions of Life.

Many of the old homes have been replaced by spacious and attractive residences, painted, papered and carpeted, equipped with up-to-date parlor, bed-room and kitchen furniture, and some of them even with water works and electric lights "and all the modern inconveniences." On the farms scientific methods are superceding primitive agriculture, crops are planted, cultivated and harvested with improved machinery, and the gasoline engine does the work of chopping and shredding feed, pumping water and sawing wood. Wagons and autotrucks haul produce to a convenient market over macadam roads; and the farmers themselves travel in handsome buggies, carriages and automobiles. The rural carrier bring the daily mail, and telephones in many homes afford communication with the neighborhood and the towns. District schools everywhere and three state high schools in the county furnish educational opportunities for every child; and the Greensboro public library with its rural branches offers literature to every home.

"The lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage." But the most precious privilege of all is to live in this historic community and to worship in this venerable church, in the midst of these sacred associations and inspiring memories, to perpetuate the glorious traditions of the past, and to dedicate ourselves to the unfinished work of a pious ancestry.







